

CHAPTER FIVE 1938-1963

World War Again And 25 Years Of Louisville's Great Growth

Industries flocked to the city to turn out military items and many stayed and converted to peacetime work once the strife ended

WAR clouds once again were gathering over Europe and Louisville stood on the threshold of its most dynamic era of industrial and business growth as the 1938-1963 quarter-century period made its debut.

There still was widespread unemployment, but the depression had eased to the extent that there was a suggestion of normalcy when the city entered the period which brings its long history up to today.

It was the greedy appetite of the madman who was loose in Europe, an expaperhanger named Adolph Hitler, that ignited the war—World War II, by number—and brought on the defense-type industrial upsurge which in reality ended the depression.

Significantly, long-range planning on the part of the Louisville Gas and Electric Company provided the city with the abundant power it needed to become a defense production center once the war came, and eventually to take permanent position among the top 20 industrial areas of the nation.

For the boom times did not end in Louisville after the war brought by Hitler and his Italian and Japanese partners in conquest was over. The city's greatest growth came in the 1950's, long after the present tense "ism" in Nazism had been made a past tense "wasm."

Hitler and his Nazi Party had risen to power in Germany in 1936, but it was not until late fall three years later that he began his systematic conquest of neighboring countries. Czechoslovakia, Poland, the Low Countries and France fell to his armies, England was in grave danger.

Meanwhile, Japan, the third member of the Berlin-Rome-Tokyo axis, had taken Chosen (Korea) and was driving deep into China and threatening the Philippines.

Once again the United States attempted to remain unentangled, but by late 1939 it was increasingly apparent that this nation eventually might be dragged into the conflict.

The fall of 1939 the Louisville Gas and



PADDY'S RUN Power Station, started in 1939 by the Louisville Gas and Electric Company, was the magnet that drew much World War II industry to the city.